



Cross and Spire

Newsletter of the First Baptist Church

P.O. Box 331, 13 School St., Lebanon, NH 03766

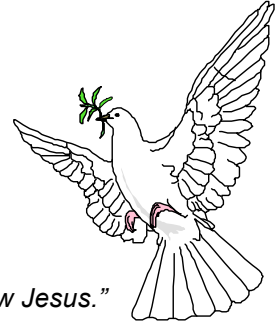
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February 2010 Volume 27, No. 2

"Not a perfect church, not a perfect people, just a simple desire to follow Jesus."



Awakenings: Past, Present, & Future

Pastor Dale Edwards

American Church history is sometimes an account of periodic times of revival and renewal within the Body of Christ. Historians speak of the three and sometimes four "Awakenings" in the United States – an "awakening" being a time when the American church is "awakened" from its slumber and, in a new experience and work of the Holy Spirit, sees waves of people becoming Christians, a recommitment of those who already believe, and the growth of God's Kingdom this side of eternity. This year, 2010, the First Baptist Church of Lebanon will be 150 years old. At the start of the "Third Awakening" in United States Christian history, a group of twenty-plus people gathered to start a new church in Lebanon, New Hampshire. In around 1860, a small chapel was built on Green Street, several houses down from the 1870 church building which we occupy today. The popular comparison of the day was that the Baptists, in comparison to the established, more intellectual Congregational church, were people of "heart religion." I have always been very happy to accept the identity of being a person of "heart religion."

If we truly believe in "heart religion", then our collective heart periodically must re-tune itself to the teaching of Scripture and the witness of the Holy Spirit. The First Baptist Church of Lebanon was born out of prayer meetings. Will a new awakening be born again out of our faithful prayers? There is so much in this past year's life at First Baptist that just has God's finger prints all over it.

Our concerts of prayer first come to my mind, along with the Community Care Team, Community Dinners, the food pantry, home groups, clothing giveaways, baptisms, worship team, twenty or more kids showing up for youth group, Sunday School, men's and women's meetings, retreats, 150-160 people gathered for worship on most Sunday mornings, individuals willing to accept positions of leadership. I am very grateful that in a difficult economic year, we saw not a decrease, but a 7% increase in our ministry's finances. Even more striking is that, in real dollars, we met our offering needs of \$153,600 plus another \$37,000 worth of giving beyond our own needs toward ministry in our broader community and the world. I just kind of think this is miraculous in the worst economic downturn since the Depression! May God bless you for all your faithfulness!

Now, having recounted these blessings, I would be remiss if I did not say that I am still praying for another Awakening. I pray for more prayer. I pray that more people will come to know Christ. I pray that our 250 seat sanctuary will be filled and resound with worship. I pray we would be immersed in Scripture. I pray for even greater times of servanthood and mission in a broken world. In 1860 there was an Awakening happening that helped this particular church be born. Could a 150th Anniversary result in the Holy Spirit bringing about wave upon wave of awakening in our church?

"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." Phil. 1:3-6.

LENT BEGINS FEBRUARY 17TH

The Lenten season begins on Ash Wednesday, February 17th. Lent is the 6 week period leading up to Easter, and has traditionally been a time for Christians to prepare their hearts for Holy Week, reflecting on the life, sufferings, and resurrection of Christ. This Lenten season we will be making devotionals available for all age groups. For adults we will have the newly revised booklet *From Fear to Love: Lenten Reflections on the Parable of the Prodigal Son* by Henri Nouwen. For Teens and College-agers, we'll have a new booklet entitled *Safe Passage*, a devotional emphasizing that Christ is with us throughout this treacherous journey of Life. For children, we'll have a daily sticker activity entitled *Jonah this Lent?!*, following Jonah through his journey as it parallels the Easter story. All Lenten materials are free to all – check them out on the tables near the church entryways!

VALENTINE'S DAY DINNER!

Make Valentine's Day special *and* help send the youth group to Deep Freeze! The youth groups will be hosting a Valentine's Day Dinner on Sunday, February 14th. Seating will be between 5:30-6:30 PM. Choice of entrée's will be Pork Roast, Baked Stuffed Chicken, and Stuffed Shells. Meals will also include salad, beverage and choice of dessert. See the fellowship hall transformed into a fine restaurant, receive great service from our dedicated staff, enjoy a delicious meal prepared by Gove Hill's chef and our young crew. Donations will support the youth group's trip to Camp Berea at the end of February. Child care will be available. See youth group members for tickets, or sign up on the church bulletin board. Adults only please!

INTERESTED IN BEING BAPTIZED?

A service of baptism is planned for Sunday, February 21st during the worship service. If you would like to be baptized or have questions concerning baptism, please see the pastor!

NOTES OF THANKS

Dear Friends at First Baptist,

Thank you so very much for the magnificent poinsettias. They radiate God's beauty and remind us of His glorious faithfulness and love.

Thank you so much for all of your prayers which have sustained us in difficult days.

With Love, Marilyn Garrow

Thank you for helping me to give my young children a Christmas . . . Thank you for all of the smiles (and screams) that you've allowed me to see!!! Thank the Lord above that this world still has people like you.

Love, A Mom & 3 Little Girls

Thanks so much!! The clothes were GREAT and everything fit!! The girls loved the games and we have a trip planned to Borders for the gift certificate.

Love, A Giving Tree Family

My sincere thanks to all of you at First Baptist for the beautiful prayer shawl. You will be in my thoughts and prayers whenever I wear it. My appreciation goes to each of you for your encouraging cards, prayers and phone calls. Thank you for your caring support. May God bless each of you as He keeps you in His loving care. With love and gratitude, Lillian Moon. "Blessed is he who has regard for the weak." Psalm 41:1.

AGAPE WORLD: RETREAT 2010

Don't miss this year's retreat happening February 19-20 at Gove Hill! The theme for the retreat is Agape World: Reflections on 1 John. It begins at 6:30 PM Friday evening and ends at 6:30 PM on Saturday. There are two options for attendance: 1) Sleep-Over Option (best value!) – includes all program sessions, Friday night snack and 3 delicious meals on Saturday, plus overnight dormstyle accommodations in the beautiful Gove Hill Manor House. Cost \$75. 2) Sleep-at-Home Option – includes program session, Friday night snack and 3 delicious meals on Saturday. Cost \$40. The retreat is open to adults and high school students. Space is limited, so please register early! Pink registration forms available at church.

DARTMOUTH MEN'S BASKETBALL GAME

Free! Any men interested in attending the Dartmouth-Princeton game on Saturday, February 6, please sign up on the sanctuary bulletin board. The game is at 7:00 at Leede Arena at Dartmouth. We will be going to Ramunto's in Hanover for pizza after the game – please bring money for pizza. If you need a ride, be at the church by 6:10 PM. Questions, contact Jim Newcomb, 448-2782.



VARIETY IN YOUR LIFE?!

Plan on coming to the First Baptist Variety Show and Dessert Potluck! Can you tell a joke, play an instrument, sing, dance, do magic tricks, play in a skit, do something unique and unusual? Share your gifts at the FBC Variety Show! Come for the show, come for dessert, come for the fun! Saturday, March 20th at 7:00 PM. Sign up your act on the sanctuary bulletin board! Hosted by Dale & Laurie Edwards.

AMERICA FOR CHRIST OFFERING

During the month of February we will be accepting the America For Christ Offering (AFC). The United States is the third largest mission field on our planet. Millions of people right on our doorsteps have a deep hunger – not just for food, education or a warm bed, but also for comfort, hope and assurance that someone, somewhere cares. Through the America for Christ Offering, ABC National Ministries provides disaster relief following such emergencies as Hurricane Katrina, refugee resettlement, chaplains in our hospitals and prisons, help to children through the American Baptist Children in Poverty Initiative, evangelism training and more. Your gifts to this important offering will provide aid throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. A special offering envelope is included in this newsletter for your convenience. Please give prayerfully and generously! Thank you.

HAITI EARTHQUAKE RELIEF

If you would like to donate to help with the relief efforts in earthquake-ravaged Haiti, you may do so through First Baptist Church. Our denominational headquarters has missionaries on the ground in Haiti, and we are also in touch with the First Haitian Baptist Church of Manchester who is staying in touch with matters. If you'd like to make a

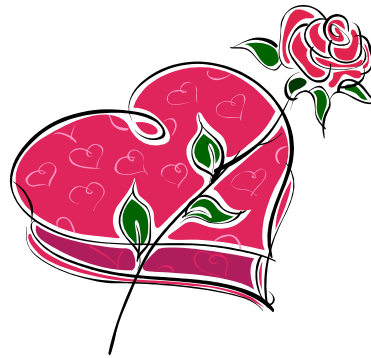
donation, please make checks payable to First Baptist Church with a memo for Haiti.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP POTLUCK

The Women's Fellowship Potluck Dinner will be held on Tuesday, February 16 at 6:00 PM at Marge Olson's home – 30 Dorset Lane, Lebanon. A sign-up sheet and directions will be available on the sanctuary bulletin board. All women are invited to bring a dish to share and enjoy a meal and time of fellowship.

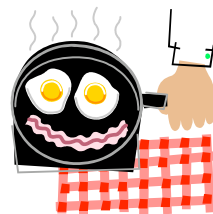
COVER PROJECT FEB. 6-7

We are hoping to get some volunteers to help with a COVER project the weekend of February 6-7. We will be working inside doing sheetrock work. If you are able to help out, please contact Chris Clark, 603-643-5793.



*Valentine's Day Dinner
Sunday, Feb. 14
Seating 5:30-6:30
Choice of Entrée & Dessert
Donation Basis
Benefit Youth Group
Trip to Deep Freeze*

**Concert of Prayers
Thursday, Feb. 25
6:30pm – 8:30pm
Join Us in Prayer for others, ourselves, our church, our community, our world!**



**MEN'S BREAKFAST
Saturday, February 13
7:30 AM
ALL MEN WELCOME!!**

*Women's Fellowship
Potluck Dinner
Tuesday, Feb. 16 @ 6:00 PM
At Marge Olson's
ALL WOMEN*

